



# Connecticut Self Storage Association

*The Voice of the Industry in Connecticut*

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## Testimony Concerning

**Bill No. 5088 AN ACT CONCERNING SELF STORAGE FACILITY LIENS**

**General Law Committee**

**February 21, 2012**

**J.R. Clisham, Immediate Past President, Connecticut Self Storage Association (CTSSA)**

### INTRODUCTION

My name is J.R. Clisham and I am a West Hartford resident. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I am the Immediate Past President of the Connecticut Self Storage Association. I am also one of the owners of Connecticut Self Storage, LLC, based in West Hartford. We operate under the trade name "CT SELF STOR". Currently our company has five locations: one each in Glastonbury, Plainville and Meriden, as well as two in West Hartford. I am here today to speak in *support* of Bill No. 5088, An Act Concerning Self Storage Facility Liens.

### THE CURRENT LAW DOES A POOR JOB NOTIFYING TENANTS – BILL NO. 5088 WILL FIX THIS

In the self storage business, we rent real estate. More simply put, we rent space. Our tenants range from soccer moms, to families on the move, to senior citizens, to small local businesses, to military personnel currently overseas. Our tenants are required to sign a lease. Thus, our tenants rent self storage space much in the same way they would rent an apartment, a retail space, an office space, or an industrial space. However, on occasion, tenants become delinquent on their rent. The current law states that in order to notify tenants that the lien sale process has begun, the facility operator must send a minimum of two (2) certified mails. Due to the nature of our business, many tenants are on the move, and they fail to update their addresses (even though we require them to do so in our lease). Therefore, at least half of these certified mails are returned undelivered.

This process is clearly expensive and ineffective. A better way would be to contact the delinquent tenant via their email. People rarely change their email address, and as a result of this better means of communication, more tenants would be aware of the facts. In the alternative, self-storage operators should be allowed to contact their delinquent tenants via verified first class mail. This is a much less expensive method which results in lower lien sale costs being charged to the defaulting, delinquent tenant. (Note that approval of this alternative method would require an amendment to Bill No. 5088).

### THE CURRENT LAW DOES A POOR JOB ADVERTISING THE LIEN SALE – BILL NO. 5088 WILL FIX THIS

Currently, the law requires the self storage operator to advertise the lien sale in a newspaper of "substantial circulation". When the current law was drafted, most of Connecticut read a daily newspaper. However, the undeniable reality of today is that newspaper readership has drastically declined. Why should storage operators be forced to pay for expensive ads in a medium that, by even the most generous estimates, only reaches 17% of the population? Bill No. 5088 would allow for electronic advertisement and would ensure that more people are aware of lien sales in the future. This will result in better attended lien sales, which should result in higher sale prices and ultimately do a better job satisfying the outstanding obligation of the defaulting, delinquent tenant.